



Connecticut
State
Department
of Education



AccelerateCT Summer Program Innovation Grant Application

AccelerateCT Summer Program Innovation Grant: Request for Proposals

Purpose: The purpose of the AccelerateCT Summer Program Innovation Grants is to provide students, especially those from traditionally underserved communities, with access to bold, high-quality, and innovative summer programming.

Time Period: June 1, 2021 – September 3, 2021

Published: April 26, 2021

Application Due Date: May 10, 2021, 5:00 PM EST

Awards Announced: by May 24, 2021

Programs may submit an application [here](#). Questions may be directed to SDE.Summerenrichment@ct.gov. All interested applicants are also welcome and encouraged to join an online application webinar on April 28, 2021 from 11:00 - 12:00 PM to learn more about the process. The registration link can be found [here](#).

Equal Opportunity Statement

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Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director/American with Disabilities Act Coordinator
State of Connecticut Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607
Hartford, CT 06103-1841
860-807-2101
Levy.Gillespie@ct.gov

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I. Introduction

With the passage of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) in March, Connecticut has an unprecedented opportunity to improve learning and support for all students. The federal stimulus package will help Connecticut address students' learning losses and meet their social, emotional and mental health needs as we move ahead and begin to advance from the disruption of the past year. Now more than ever, it is critical that communities come together to plan for impactful out-of-school time learning and enrichment opportunities.

An important asset in that recovery is the federal funding provided in the American Rescue Plan of 2021 under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER). ARP ESSER requires states to reserve at least 1% of the state set-aside for summer learning and enrichment programs. In order to utilize Connecticut's set-aside, the Connecticut Governor's Office and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) have partnered with the six Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) to release the **AccelerateCT Summer Program Innovation Grant** application for Summer 2021 programming.

The Innovation Grant program will award programmatic and operational funding to organizations that can serve Connecticut children at scale, provide holistic learning opportunities that blend educational and enrichment components, and remove financial and other types of barriers that have typically precluded participation. These grants will be awarded to organizations with a clear record of providing excellent summer learning opportunities for students, particularly for students from traditionally underserved communities. Programs should respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care). We encourage applicants to take a community-wide approach in developing their application and partner with other stakeholders in their communities or regions to strengthen the opportunities available to children and youth.

Applicants must commit to using the funding to serve additional children through existing programming or through the creation of new, innovative programming (e.g., hire more staff, rent a larger facility, expand hours/weeks, expand ages served, etc.). Applicants may also use funding to provide wraparound services (e.g., transportation) for program participants (up to a maximum of 40% of the total grant award).

Programs may apply for a grant amount between \$50,000 to \$250,000. A maximum of one grant will be awarded per organization and priority will be given to those that demonstrate an ability to serve a significantly greater number of students. Applicants should only apply for the amount that they are certain they will be able to spend efficiently during the grant period.

The number of grants funded will depend on the number of applicants and funds available. Applicants are highly encouraged to share sources of additional funding, including in-kind resources such as facilities, as part of their application.

II. Eligible Applicants

- Non-profit organizations with a current, valid child care center or youth camp license from the Office of Early Childhood (OEC); or
 - *(Note: OEC licensed programs can only request funding for sites with existing licenses with school-age care endorsements. Sites licensed to serve only children ages five and under may not apply.)*
- License-exempt child care center, youth camp, or other summer program operated by a (A) municipal agency; (B) private or independent school; or (C) are organizations that are specifically exempted by name in the statute (Sec. 19a-77); or
- Local education agencies (LEAs) that received less than \$50,000 in Elementary and Secondary Emergency School Relief Fund II (ESSER II) funding; or
- License-exempt non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) for programs serving exclusively youth ages sixteen or older; or
- A partnership led by one of the above eligible organizations, working together with other non-profit organizations, municipal agencies, local and regional boards of education, Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), charter schools, or magnet schools.

Private and independent schools and faith-based organizations are eligible to apply only if the program is open to all children and not just those who are of a particular faith, enrolled in a particular school or members of the applicant organization.

License-exempt programs that do not receive Care 4 Kids must submit as part of their application a letter signed by the Municipal Lead Administrator or the Private School Lead Administrator attesting that the municipality/private school administers the above named program and therefore retains ultimate responsibility for the management and oversight of such program, for the staff employed at the program and the children attending the program.

III. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Student Population.** Programs should prioritize students from traditionally underserved communities and those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (including but not limited to students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, students on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or other assistance programs).
- **Scale.** These grants are geared towards entities that can implement programs at scale, either regionally or statewide.
- **Enrichment Component.** Programs must provide enjoyable, challenging, and engaging enrichment opportunities through which students can accelerate their learning, which could include STEAM projects, sports, music, art, hands-on experiences, mentorship, teamwork, field trips, guest speakers, career/college exploration, cooking, food and nutrition, wellness, physical activity and physical education. For programs that offer enrichment outside a traditional camp format, applicants must describe what a typical daily/weekly activity schedule would look like. Enrichment activities should make up at least 50 percent of all structured programming.
- **Record of Impact.** Programs must be evidence-based and demonstrate, either through available research, past program data, or by other means, a superior record of improving student outcomes.
- **Accelerated ramp up.** Programs must demonstrate an ability to quickly build and operationalize their program through existing partnerships with school districts, colleges, municipalities, and/or other educational and community organizations.
- **Minimal or no cost.** All programs must be provided to students at no or minimal cost to them and their families.
- **Time Period.** Programs should aim to serve students for the majority of the day, and as many weeks as possible throughout the summer. Programs with part-day participation are encouraged to partner with other programs to accommodate the remaining portions of the day.
- **Ages Served.** Programs must serve children within the age group of 5-18, with the exception that programs may serve youth with special needs, still enrolled in their school district, up to their 22nd birthday.

IV. Program Quality Requirements

All organizations receiving grant funding must adhere to the following quality requirements. Note that nothing in this section shall be construed to affect existing legal requirements established for individuals with access to minor children, including but not limited to those related to youth camps, employee criminal background checks, and any relevant licenses and permits. All subcontracted/partner staff must meet the same requirements as if they were actual staff of the grantee.

- All camp/program staff that supervise children must have participated in a minimum of two (2) hours of training on supporting student social-emotional learning at some point between August 15, 2020 the start of their work with children. Free on-line training opportunities will be made available through the Connecticut After School Network to meet these requirements.
- In addition to safety training (e.g. first aid/CPR/medical certification), all staff must receive training on safe operations including COVID-19 social distancing and infection control requirements, CDC and state guidelines
- There shall be a designated staff person in charge who is eighteen years of age or older on site at all times the child care program is in operation.
- If any program/camp includes activities at a waterfront or swimming area, whether as a regular part of their location or as a field trip, each separate water location must have an appointed on-site director who shall be at least twenty years of age and shall possess an American Red Cross Lifeguard Training current rating or its equivalent.
- Staff acting in a lifeguard capacity shall meet the requirements of section 19a-113a-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- Staff-to-student ratios when students are in or on the water is one staff person to twelve students for students age 6 or older or a 1:9 ratio for students under age 6.
- Staff acting as counselors shall be at least sixteen years of age. Youth acting as counselors-in-training shall be at least fourteen years of age. Each staff member shall meet the age requirements prescribed in this section on or before the date such staff member commences employment at the program/camp.
- Programs must maintain a ratio of at least one staff to ten children under age six, one staff to twelve children under age eleven, and one staff to fifteen children over the age of eleven. The ratio of staff to children shall be maintained at all times. When there is a mixed age group, the lower required ratio for the age of the youngest child shall prevail. The ratio of staff to campers, as specified in this subsection, shall be maintained at all times, including during all outings and trips except for structured activities offered exclusively for school age children.
- Prior to the start of the program/camp, administrators shall develop a written emergency management plan for matters that include, but are not limited to: fire, crisis response, medical incidents, weather related incidents, man-made disasters, natural disasters or acts of terrorism. The plan shall address (1) the evacuation and removal of children to a safe location, (2) lock-down procedures, (3) notification and reunification of parents with their children, (4) process for notifying emergency personnel, and (5) any necessary

methods and procedures for the evacuation and relocation of children with special needs, developed in consultation with the parents of such children. All staff shall be trained on the details of the plan and a copy shall be maintained on-site and available to all staff.

V. Data, Monitoring, and Program Implementation

In accepting this grant, applicants agree to the following:

- Comply with all state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements as detailed further in the program assurances sections, including but not limited to all legal requirements regarding oversight of youth programs and access to minors
- Engage with other community stakeholders including the school district to ensure the proposed program is enhancing and not duplicating services.
- Participate in any data collection that is required by the state or federal government for the use of this funding;
- Permit visits at any time during the summer program for quality advising and/or monitoring;
- Agree that the organization applying maintains full responsibility for the operation of the program, regardless of any partnership, volunteer, or subcontract arrangements.
- Ensure program accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, all materials should be made available in accessible formats (e.g., printed, digital and web based information).
- Provide a final report, in such format provided by the CSDE, no later than October 30, 2021.

VI. Program Assurances

Programs receiving funding through this grant competition will agree to abide by all related federal and state regulations, including but not limited to:

- Failure to comply with all Assurances and Certifications in this application, all relevant provisions and requirements of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021, or any other applicable law or regulation may result in liability under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. § 3729, et seq.; OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and 18 USC § 1001, as appropriate.
- Utilize funds only for activities allowable under section 2001 of the ARP Act of 2021. No funds shall be used to subsidize or offset executive salaries or benefits of individuals who are not employees of the applicant or engaged partners or for expenditures related to state or local teacher or faculty unions or associations.
- Provide reports as may be required by the CSDE which could include but are not limited to: the methodology used to provide services or assistance to students and staff; the uses of funds (by the applicant organization and/or other entities) and demonstration of their compliance with Section 18003(d), such as any use of funds addressing the digital divide, including securing access to home-based connectivity and remote-use devices, related issues in supporting remote learning for all students, including disadvantaged populations.
- All requests for payment shall be based upon allowable purposes and made in accordance with cash management principles.
- We shall cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such ARP/ESSER funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the United States Department of Education and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.
- We will comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) requirements in Subpart D-Post Federal Award Requirements (2 CFR §§200.300-345) and Subpart E-Cost Principles (2 CFR §§200.400-475), which states that (ESSER) funds must be used for purposes that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable under the ARP Act.
- We will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances; the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99; the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

- Each program will be administered in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications;
- Control of funds and property acquired using program funds will be maintained and administered by the appropriate organization;
- Fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, federal funds;
- The organization will make reports to the state agency or board and to the Secretary as may be needed for the state agency or board and the Secretary to perform their duties under each program, and each organization will maintain records (as required in Section 443) and provide access to those records as the state board or agency Secretary deems necessary to carry out their responsibilities;
- The organization will provide opportunities for the participation in, planning for, and operation of each program by teachers, parents, and other interested agencies, organizations, and individuals;
- Applications, evaluations, plans, or reports related to each program will be made available to parents and the public;
- Facilities constructed under any program will be consistent with overall state construction plans and standards and with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in order to ensure that the facilities are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities;
- The organization has adopted effective procedures for acquiring and disseminating information and research regarding the programs and for adopting, where appropriate, promising educational practices to teachers and administrators participating in each program;
- None of the funds expended under any applicable program will be used to acquire equipment if such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the purchasing entity or its employees; and
- Our organization has discussed this grant application with other stakeholders in our community including the school district to ensure we are enhancing and not duplicating services.

VII. Selection and Notification

Grant applications will be read and scored using the rubric in Appendix A.

The CSDE will notify applicants via email of the acceptance or rejection of their proposals by May 24. If a proposal is selected for funding, the CSDE will initiate a grant award letter.

The level of funding and effective dates of the projects will be set forth in the notification of the grant award. The CSDE will retain all proposals submitted and such proposals will become part of the public domain. As such, applicants should not include any confidential information in their survey responses, including but not limited to student names and other personally identifiable information.

The CSDE reserves the right to award in part, to reject a proposal in its entirety or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities or omissions if, in its judgment, the best interest of the state would be served. After receiving the grant application, the CSDE reserves the right not to award all grants or to negotiate specific grant amounts as part of the evaluation process to meet federal requirements or the State Board of Education's priorities. In addition, the CSDE reserves the right to change the dollar amount of grant awards to meet federal guidelines for grant awards.

All awards are subject to availability of federal funds. Grants are not final until award letters are executed.

VIII. How to Apply

Applications must be submitted no later than May 10, 2021 at 5 pm. Applicants may apply using this link: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/AccelerateCT/Summer-Enrichment>

Questions can be submitted via email here: SDE.summerenrichment@ct.gov

Common questions will be addressed in a Frequently Asked Questions document here: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/COVID19/AccelerateCT/Summer-Enrichment>

Programs should respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care).

Application Template

Organization Information

- Organization Name
- Mailing Street Address
- Mailing City
- Mailing State
- Mailing Zip Code
- Site Name
- Site Street Address
- Site City
- Site State
- Site Zip Code

Organization Type:

- Nonprofit organizations with a current, valid child care center or youth camp license from the Office of Early Childhood (OEC);
- License-exempt child care center/youth camp operated by a (A) municipal agency; (B) private school; or (C) are specifically exempted by statute;
- License-exempt not-for-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) for programs serving exclusively youth ages sixteen or older;
- Local education agencies (LEAs) that received less than \$50,000 in Elementary and Secondary Emergency School Relief Fund II (ESSER II) funding

Organization Director/Contact Person

- Director First Name
- Director Person Middle Name
- Director Person Last Name
- Director Title

- Director Street Address
- Director City
- Director State
- Director Zip Code
- Director Telephone
- Director Email

If different than the Agency Director, please provide the following for the primary grant contact:

- Contact Person First Name
- Contact Person Middle Name
- Contact Person Last Name
- Contact Telephone
- Contact Email

Program Site # 1 Director/Contact Person

- Director First Name
- Director Person Middle Name
- Director Person Last Name
- Director Title
- Director Street Address
- Director City
- Director State
- Director Zip Code
- Director Telephone
- Director Email

Program Site # 2 Director/Contact Person

- Director First Name
- Director Person Middle Name
- Director Person Last Name
- Director Title
- Director Street Address
- Director City
- Director State
- Director Zip Code
- Director Telephone
- Director Email

Program Site # 3 Director/Contact Person

- Director First Name
- Director Person Middle Name
- Director Person Last Name

- Director Title
- Director Street Address
- Director City
- Director State
- Director Zip Code
- Director Telephone
- Director Email

Other Information Requested

- Amount of funding requested
- Total program budget for Summer 2021
- Please provide a list of all sources of additional funding (including organization name and funding amount).
- Total number of children expected to serve across all sites
- This summer, the state of Connecticut is also launching a Summer 2021 College Corps, a new initiative that will hire college students to work in summer camps and programs across the state where additional capacity is needed.

Do you have a need for additional staff support to work in your program this summer? If yes, please comment how many staff you would be interested in having (max of 3 staff). Note, that answering “Yes” to this question does not guarantee your program will receive additional staff. The CSDE will communicate more information about the College Corps in the coming weeks. (Yes or No)

Proposal Narrative (word counts in parentheses)

1. Describe the children/youth served, age levels, and particular need in this group of students. Additionally, please provide the total number of children that will be served by your camp this summer and the communities and/or regions of the state which your program will serve. (600 word limit)
2. Describe how your program will address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care). (600 word limit)
3. Provide an overview of the summer program and specific enrichment program(s) offered, including any research or evidence to highlight the impact of the program on student outcomes, and how this program will serve the state’s goal of providing “**bold and innovative** summer programming” to Connecticut students. Optional upload of document for daily and/or weekly activity schedule. (1,000 word limit)
4. Provide detail on program logistics, including: start and end dates; operational hours; facilities; staffing plan; transportation plan; how will meals and snacks be handled, expected student costs, etc. Programs should also include here how they intend to meet all operational and quality requirements outlined in this RFP. (1,000 word limit)

5. Describe what staff training and student supports you will provide as part of this summer program that will support students' social, emotional, mental and physical health. (500 word limit)
6. Describe how this program will partner with other entities (school districts, colleges, municipalities, and/or other educational and community organizations) to recruit and prepare for serving students this summer in an accelerated fashion. Optional upload of letter of support from program partner(s). (600 word limit)
7. Describe any other additional points important to consider for this program, including a description of the organization's current financial situation and if it has provided summer or afterschool programs in the past three years. (600 word limit)
8. Provide a budget narrative with detail on how the grant funding would be spent. (2,000 word limit).
9. Program assurances - Organization agrees to abide by all of the program requirements (Yes or No)

Budget

100 Personal Services – Employee Salary
200 Personal Services – Employee Benefits
300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services
400 Purchased Property Services
500 Other Purchased Services
600 Supplies
800 Miscellaneous
Total Amount Requested

See Appendix B for a more detailed description of each of these budget categories.

Appendix A: Scoring Rubric

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	MARGINAL	WEAK	INADEQUATE
	(well-conceived and thoroughly developed)	(clear and complete)	(requires additional clarification)	(lacks sufficient information)	(information not provided)
Questions 1 + 2. NEED FOR PROJECT (45 points max)					
Provides a description of the children/youth to be served and makes a strong case for the specific needs of this community, focused on the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care).	15	10	5	0	0
The program serves students at scale (15 points for 300+ students, 8 points for 250+ students, 10 points for 200+ students, 5 points for 150+ students)	15	10	5	0	0
The program serves students either regionally or statewide.	15	10	5	0	0
Question 3. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN (35 points max)					
At least half of the program's time is comprised of bold, innovative, and engaging enrichment activities	15	10	5	0	0
Program is evidence-based and demonstrates, either through available research, past program	15	10	5	0	0

data, or by other means, a superior record of improving student outcomes.					
Provides an example of an engaging daily activity schedule that meets childrens' and families' needs.	5	4	3	2	0
Question 4. PROGRAM LOGISTICS (50 points max)					
Provide detail on program logistics, including: start and end dates; operational hours; facilities; days of operation	5	4	3	2	0
Provide detail on transportation, whether it is parent pick-up and drop off or provides transportation, including any transportation to field trips	5	4	3	2	0
Provides at least two snacks and lunch and describes how meals and snacks will be provided.	5	4	3	2	0
Provides a description of program staffing that includes adequate supervision and support for all staff that have contact with children.	5	4	3	2	0
Program has no or minimum costs for participating youth	15	10	5	0	0
Program clearly describes how it meets all operational, staff, and quality requirements outlined in RFP	15	10	5	0	0
Question 5. STAFF TRAINING AND STUDENT SUPPORTS (5 points max)					
Describes the staff training and student supports that will be provided to support students' social,	5	4	3	2	0

emotional, mental and physical health.					
Question 6. PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION (30 points max)					
Provides a detailed description of a valuable partnership that includes their respective roles and responsibilities	15	10	5	0	0
Describes a realistic, achievable plan to recruit a full complement of program participants, including additional expanded capacity.	15	10	5	0	0
Question 7. OTHER INFORMATION (8 points max)					
Provides evidence that the organization has adequate fiscal health to sustain at least five weeks of summer programming, and has adequate financial controls and policies.	5	4	3	2	0
The organization has operated a summer or after-school program in the past three years.	3	0	0	0	0
BUDGET (30 points max)					
Budget narrative provides sufficient detail about how the grant funding will be spent	15	10	5	0	0
Funding ask is justified given the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits.	15	10	5	0	0
ADDITIONAL POINTS (38 points max)					
Describes how the grant funding will be used to serve students with disabilities, those on free/reduced	15	10	5	0	0

lunch status, students on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or other assistance programs.					
For programs serving ages 5-12 that provide more than 5 hours per day (2 points for 6 hours, 3 points for 7 hours, 5 points for 8 hours, 10 points for 9 or more hours per day) to help with families' child care needs.	10	5	3	2	0
Programs providing programming five days per week	3	0	0	0	0
Site provides program for more than 3 weeks (3 point for 4 weeks, 5 points for 6 weeks, 10 points for 8 or more weeks)	10	5	3	0	0

Appendix B: Budget Code Descriptions

100 Personal Services – Employee Salary

Amounts paid to employees of the grantee. Include all salaries for these individuals while they are on the grantee payroll including overtime salaries or salaries of temporary employees. Substitute teachers or teachers hired on a temporary basis to perform work in positions of either a temporary or permanent nature are also reported here. Tutors or individuals whose services are acquired through a contract are not included in the category. A general rule of thumb is that a person for whom the grantee is paying employee benefits and who is on the grantee payroll is included; a person who is paid a fee with no grantee obligation for benefits is not.

200 Personal Services – Employee Benefits

Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are part of the cost of personal services.

300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services

Services which, by their nature, can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, etc.

400 Purchased Property Services

Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. These services are performed by persons other than grantee employees. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.

500 Other Purchased Services

Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.

600 Supplies

Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use, or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.

800 Miscellaneous

Amounts paid for goods and services not otherwise classified above.